The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

UN

FIVE years ago, at the end of the war, there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the UN organizing conference in San Francisco—a great deal of enthusiasm, emotion and hopeful excitement.

Sometimes the San Francisco meetings seemed to bog down in technicalities which were too much for the average newspaper reader. But there were always the pictures of exotically dressed delegates to look at. More than all the words, they dramatized what was going on. There were the candid shots of beautiful Oriental women sipping martinis at the Top of the Mark and the witty cartoons in *The New Yorker* about Arabs in their flowing robes strolling down Market Street, for instance. Pictures like these got the idea across that something wonderful was happening in San Francisco. In this great worldwide organization there was going to be something tangible on which ordinary men could fasten their hopes for peace.

That is the way it was in the beginning—almost. For even then there was Russia and Communism. These were unpleasant realities that one worried about quietly and tried to talk about as little as possible, but they were still there. The general feeling was that this was the way things were and who could do anything about it. In those days you would hear people say hopefully, "If the Russians really cooperate, it might work out beautifully, and, who knows, maybe they have changed." Or "Even the Soviets don't want war. Remember, they're tired too, and their country lies in ruins—remember that." And others: "Well if there's any way to deal with the Russians it's through an organization like this one, so let's just hope for the best." But even while they spoke like this, people felt vaguely guilty, as if by voicing their honest fears they were being disloyal to all the hopes of humanity and the official optimism of the day. It was as if everywhere you turned there was a Russian listening whose sensitivity, above all else, had to be taken into consideration.

So even from the beginning the important thing to be said about the United Nations was that they were not united—not in a common faith, a solid hope or an abiding charity. The UN was not the outgrowth of a unity that existed; it was organized as a superstructure for a unity that, it was hoped, would some day be developed.

The bedrock unity so devoutly wished for in 1945 was never achieved. Time and again during the past five years it has seemed as if the organizational superstructure, built on aspirations more than realities, might collapse. Unity, unity, the anxious delegates cried. But there was no unity, and everyone knew it.

Now there is talk about a revitalized UN. Something of the enthusiasm of San Francisco spread over Lake Success when the UN, following President Truman's bold lead, lined up against the Korean invaders. In this case, the UN gave concrete, dynamic expression to the mounting world opposition to Communist aggression; it served as the machinery for a sentiment that does in fact exist. And because it acted vigorously and conscientiously, UN prestige—and effectiveness—is higher right now than it has ever been.

WHO knows what the future holds for the UN? The Russians may in time call off their present boycott and return, but never again to their old bully-boy role, it would seem. Or the Russians may withdraw altogether. Without the Russians the UN would no longer have even the appearance of being what was envisioned at San Francisco. But it might be something else. It might provide the political machinery for that half of the world which is united in devotion to freedom.

In any case, things will never be the same again. When the Communists began their march on Korea, the United Nations organization faced a choice. It had to choose between life and death,

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• NEXT WEEK •

"As Dr. Johnson said about the walking dog, the wonder is not that the poets do not always do it well, but that they can do it at all: that down the long centuries, poet and verse are still as authentic, as unique, as valid, as when 'burning Sappho loved and sang.' "

ANNE FREMANTLE writes of the recent poetry of Peter Viereck, E. E. Cummings, Alfred Hayes and John Frederick Nims.

and it chose to live. It chose to stand up to tyranny and fight for peace. That is the kind of organization the peoples of the world had in mind when they sent their enthusiastic, hopeful delegates to San Francisco in the summer of 1945.

Other Victories

IT WAS not the Soviet Army that attacked the weak Southern Korea Republic. It was not the Soviet Army that drove Chiang Kai-shek back to islands off the China coast. The Soviets were there, certainly; look under the titles, and behind the cries of "Revolution" and between the shouts for "Independence" and someone is there to talk for Joe.

But while the Soviets smoke their pipes at the other end of the telephone lines, it is the French legionnaire who fights the Indo-Chinese; it is the British soldier who is fighting the Malayans; it is American men, with the equipment awkward and hot about their hips, and the steel shell on their helmet liners, and the prospect of death by mortar to defend that 38th Parallel, who walk to battle against Koreans.

In New York City, in depressing afternoon heat, young people are soliciting signatures for the Stockholm Peace petition. On the walk before the Museum of Modern Art they say "If Einstein's scared, so am I!" and "Picasso, Rouault—they've all signed it. Sign up for peace." Some people are sympathetic and sign up for peace.

The ideological warfare sometimes breaks out into tank columns; and on those occasions the diabolical perversity of the struggle requires the ignorant libertarians to be killed in the name of liberty.

Now two groups of eminent people have projects to carry on the fight in the minds of people. The most practical and immediate is the "Free Europe Radio" of the Committee for a Free Europe. This independent broadcasting station will carry the messages of Gafencu, Mikolajczyk, Dimitrov, Nagy and other democratic political exiles to their countrymen in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Hungary and Bulgaria. "They will give the lie to the Communist propaganda and tell their listeners of the undying struggle to insure freedom everywhere," the Committee says. Radio Free Europe will supplement the

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Voice of America, making use of the tactics and the bluntness government agencies must avoid. The transmitters went on the air July 4th, and on Bastile Day they will begin a full program schedule.

And Senator William Benton of Connecticut, with a dozen senatorial colleagues that include Arkansas' Fulbright, Connecticut's McMahon, Oregon's Morse and New Hampshire's Tobey, has proposed what he calls a Marshall Plan of Ideas. He would have steady pressure through international channels for freedom of information. He would expand the work of UNESCO and student exchanges, and develop a free international broadcasting network that would reach all radio sets.

We are fascinated, just now, by the new communiques and the new casualty lists, and it is hard to focus on something else: the fact that it is more important to win people than to win battles.

Fiddling?

THE US Senate does not always act in unison with the House, but when a vote is virtually unanimous in the lower chamber, the upper one rarely takes the opposite tack. Senators and Congressmen are not that different. The 375-14 vote in the House for the excise tax reduction bill, June 29, should mean favorable action in the Senate, and even make it safe from possible veto by the President. Yet with present anxieties what they are, its enactment is uncertain.

How does the House seek to make life a little more pleasant as the cold war flares up? Luggage is first on the list of tax reductions. Miscellaneous kits and bags are to get off scot free. A good percentage is to be whacked off the taxes on bus, rail, plane and boat fares. Tires, tubes and auto parts are in for the same treatment. So it is safe to say that one ingredient in the House prescription is cheaper (and more abundant) travel.

They want us to look smarter, too. Excess taxes on products used in barber shops and beauty parlors would be dropped and the taxes on furs and jewelry lowered.

Recreation has a prominent place in the plan. Movie and theater taxes would be cut in half, cabaret and roof garden excises reduced a quarter. Penny slot machines would be tax free. Musical instruments would have their rates materially cut. It would cost less to buy chewing tobacco, snuff and cigars. Fishing boat expeditions would be tax free. So would admissions to county fairs, serious concerts, the Metropolitan Opera and other "educational" operations.

Households would find it cheaper to buy the ordinary alarm clock as well as many types of electrical appliances including that triumph of warmth and comfort—the electric blanket.

This happy catalogue would be incomplete without mention of one commodity which it is hard to believe has a heavily-manned lobby in Washington: aromatic breath sweeteners. Actually, tax relief on all these items is due less to a Congressional desire to make life more pleasant for the voter than to the star-chamber testimony and private persuasion of various distributors. Once the idea of excise reduction got started, every sort of enterprise claimed a share.

Perhaps life must go on despite Korea and the Kremlin. No doubt the momentum impelling this particular bit of Congressional machinery got started weeks ago. The wheels simply kept grinding on. But there is a certain revealing irony in the fact that the American House of Representatives should have been busying itself about such gadgets and services at the very hour the fate of the world hung in the balance.

It's an Ill Wind . . .

IN the first few hours after the President made his decision to hold South Korea, one felt above all that this country had taken a tremendous and necessary risk, a gamble that could lead us almost anywhere. Most of us thought little then of the gamble that the Russians themselves had taken. Perhaps we have developed a kind of unconscious habit of regarding the mysterious secrecy of the Kremlin with such awe and curiosity that it seems almost impossible for the men behind those walls to take a gamble or to make a really serious blunder.

At this time no one can say with certainty that they have blundered. But this much can be said: nothing like this could possibly have been devised by us to bring the free world up off its haunches. There was very little hesitation about who was the aggressor: it was like flicking on the lights in the middle of the night and finding a thief in the bedroom.

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When one considers the state of the world in the hours just before the Korean war—with Europe biting its nails and wondering if we would ever really fight, with the Americans just about to withdraw their troops from Japan, and with the British Laborites stalling for time on European unity—it is hard to imagine how anything else but open aggression could so swiftly bring us to our own senses and show up Russian Communism to the doubters at the same time. As Christopher Dawson wrote some months ago:

> Our generation has been forced to realize how fragile and unsubstantial are the barriers that separate civilization from the forces of destruction. We have learned that barbarism is not a picturesque myth or a half-forgotten memory of a long-passed stage of history, but an ugly underlying reality which may erupt with shattering force whenever the moral authority of a civilization loses its control.

It speaks ill of the moral authority of our civilization to realize that we prosecute war more energetically than we relieve the poverty of the world's underprivileged. Perhaps that, too, Russia has helped us to understand, and if so, the Korean gamble will indeed have made for her own undoing.

Letter to the Editors

ON OPENING their mail the other day, the editors of the London *Times* discovered that they had heard from a famous countryman, Arnold Toynbee, who wrote in to say, in effect, that he thought the *Times*, in its support of the Labor Party's decision not to join the Continental coal and steel talks, was being a bit nineteenth-century in its thinking about Europe, a mental luxury he is afraid the editors can no longer afford.

The *Times* had said editorially that the Labor Party's aloofness "reflects British public opinion and the facts of British life in the world." The paper had reference, mainly, to the fact that Britain must look out first of all for Commonwealth affairs; the Labor Party's misgivings are mostly based on different grounds—the belief that a socialist country has to be wary of cooperating with capitalist countries, since capitalism is, in Labor's view, the source of ruinous competition and war and to make alliance with it could very well do dirt to the chances for world socialism and world peace—but it so happens that as far as the coal and steel talks are concerned, the position of the *Times* coincides with that of the Labor Party.

Mr. Toynbee believes that if this reticent attitude does reflect British public opinion, and if the British people are unwilling to surrender some of their sovereignty to a supra-national legislative and judicial body controlling the prices and production of Europe's coal and steel, then this public opinion may well be in serious error. He writes:

> Today we are once again engaged in the usual struggle for the preservation of our Western way of life. The freedoms of which this consists are applications of Christian principles, and national sovereignty is not one of these. If the people of Western Christendom do not subordinate their national sovereignties now with one accord, we may lose the cold war. Our choice may lie between winning the cold war by subordinating national sovereignties and forfeiting national sovereignties by losing the cold war.

This letter was written a few days before the outbreak of war in Korea. The reaction of the American Government to that event sent a charge of resistance and unity through the free world. But it is of little credit to our political and spiritual foresight to realize that it took open war to arouse us to the determined defense of what Arnold Toynbee is talking about in his letter.

There is as yet no assurance that the British Government acknowledges that the time has come to sacrifice sovereignty. They do, no doubt, acknowledge the fact that the world must inevitably move toward world government and that that means sacrificing sovereignty. But contrary to Labor's hopes, the world will never get there in one socialist leap. It will get there, if at all, step by step, and the most important one yet contemplated is the plan to pool Europe's coal and steel. This plan would make the sacrifice of sovereignty an accomplished fact. It would bring the possibility of world government down from the clouds of hazy speculation.

The melancholy prospect that Arnold Toynbee foresees is that it is quite possible for the West to fiddle while the world goes up in smoke. This can happen if we care to spend what time remains arguing the fine points of socialism and capitalism, rather than putting off the argument until later, remembering that the living waters of our culture are neither socialist nor capitalist but Christian.

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Prisoners from the East

The dispossessed returning from the East bring with them "a misery whose depths no one can plumb."

By EDWARD E. SWANSTROM

THERE is a large camp near the center of Germany, close to the demarcation line between the Western and Eastern Republics of that divided nation, where the men held in slave labor by the Soviet Government are turned over once again to their families, to freedom. This collection of barracks is known as Camp Friedland, or Land of Peace. For some time, the Russian authorities have liberated between twenty and thirty thousand men every month through Friedland. In general, the men returned recently are adequately dressed and have received more or less the same food as Russian workers. Their appearance is vastly different from that of the skeleton-like creatures with bloated heads and feet that used to be returned in trainloads to their home country.

The day that I visited Friedland, there was no homecoming, so I had time to look at the installations of the camp—notably the Search Service. This is a Red Cross Service to help these men, often separated from their families for anywhere from four to seven years, to locate them again. The Search Service is located in a large Red Cross barracks, whose walls are decked with pictures of the missing. One picture showed a gang of slave laborers rebuilding a city of Eastern Europe. One man was facing the camera, and his features could be clearly distinguished. A notation underneath read:

> "This is my husband. I have had no word from him for four years. Does anyone know where he is now or whether he is still among the living?"

Evidently no one had word of the fate of this man, and in the country where he is held for forced labor, communication with families is forbidden. I saw many other such appeals, mostly printed by the family of the lost man, and carrying a copy of his picture. These appeals are attached to walls and gathering places wherever former Prisoners of War congregate, and are a pathetic testimony to the power of human beings to hope against all hope.

One picture would show an ordinary middle-aged man, and underneath would be such a notice:

> "This is our father. He wrote to us from the Eastern front and his comrades say he was captured near Orel. Our mother has died. Write to us if you have seen our father. Greta and Johann Moschle."

Then follows the address of the children.

Another such flimsy poster carried a picture of a young man and an appeal from a mother:

> "My son Gerhard Foerster was never reported dead, but some of his comrades say he was taken prisoner at Rostov. Has anyone seen him in any mine or camp in Russia? He is my only child. He was born in 1926."

The returned Prisoners of War scan these pictures, and if they have knowledge of the persons' whereabouts, or of their death in captivity, they use the Red Cross Services to notify the families. Even a death notice is far better than the day-to-day anguish of waiting and not knowing.

But for many men, there is no news at all. They know that their families have been expelled. They sometimes learn that a daughter or a son has died in some place or another. But some wives or sons or daughters have died en route, or shortly after arriving, and have left no trace. In the terrible chaos of the great waves of expulsions, no listings of the dead and missing were possible. The men then wait around in the camps while additional searches are made, and finally if no news comes through, they wander back into an empty world and try to take up life again. Many, moreover, are sick. These are gathered into special homes for sick POW's. Caritas in the diocese of Hildesheim has such a convalescent home, as has the diocese of Paderborn—as have most of the areas of Germany. This is the last bitter end of the double tragedy of expulsion and slave labor—two of the things for whose obliteration we entered the war in the first place.

There are many such men in hospitals, and it is hard to meet the misery of their eyes. They tell how they wrote to their old address in Silesia,

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Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia or Poland proper, and how the letter was returned, or how no answer came back at all. Among this group there is a well of misery whose depths no one can plumb—a misery only equalled by that monstrous suffering inflicted by the Nazi regime on innocent people during the years of the war.

In Friedland that day there were some of these men — men who had been lost four or five years in the depths of Russia, and now upon liberation were doubly lost, because life had taken away all trace of those who were dear to them, even their children. The Caritas Director translated their stories for me, stories that in any other age would have been so extraordinary that the teller would have been doubted by his fellows, but today have become the everyday tales of drafted, deported, dispossessed and brutalized humanity.

One, I remember, was a young man in his twenties. He was drafted from his home in Silesia. After being captured on the Eastern front, he was put to work in a Soviet mine even while the war was going on. The food, he said, was indescribably bad those first years, but it was similar to the food of the Russian miners themselves. In 1946 and 1947, as conditions in Russia improved, so did the food served to the slave laborers in the mines. The working hours were shortened, and life became more bearable physically. All the weaker among the forced laborers died during the first three years of captivity, he explained. Men dropped on all sides of him, and no one was informed of their deaths. Those who survived the first two years were the hardiest and the toughest. The hope of being reunited with their families, of seeing again their native villages, helped these men to cling to life in the most desolate hours.

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FOR this young man there was no return to his native village, since it had changed hands. Ever since the day of his return, the Red Cross had been trying to locate his mother and father and sister, but not a trace of them had been found anywhere. The whole village had been evacuated, and other expelled families from the same area were listed with the Search Services.

As his parents were rather old, they might have perished anonymously as did so many older people, during the hard days of the flight of the millions from the East to the West. As for his sister, she also had vanished without trace. There had been at that time, many transports of women towards the East, and perhaps this man's sister was one of the thousands of women of the vanquished who had been carried off almost like the booty that pagan barbarian armies carried off after battle so long ago.

It was hard to say anything to this young man, because words of comfort would sound unreal. He is one of many who, after each transport of returnees, wait behind for word that does not come, for reunions that will never happen.

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I ASKED a delegate of War Relief Services to meet one of the large transports of Heimkehrer (returnees) at Friedland. I received a short report of the human aspect of the event:

"We had been told to expect the release of the 1,700 POW's at 11 o'clock in the morning. I was at Camp Friedland in time to see Father Krahe set up his supplies—cigarettes, cakes (given by citizens of the localities nearby), cocoa, bread, and such prized amenities as soap and shaving cream.

"Father Krahe always meets the men of the transports as they come past the barrier into the Western zones, and he told me that many men were already informed in Moscow that a priest would be stationed there to greet them. Actually, Father Krahe is not 'stationed' there in the strict sense of the term. He has volunteered for this job because his own locality suffered little during the war years, and as a young priest, he wanted to be of some service to the seething mass of humanity displaced since the peace. He has set up a very practical barracks chapel decorated by a striking painting of Our Lady protecting by her mantle the dispossessed and the homeless. Father Krahe gives real service to the 'Hard Core' of returned prisoners—those whose families are missing.

"A message came through from the Soviet barrier that the men would not be released until three o'clock in the afternoon. We toured the camp and inspected the Red Cross Search Service and at three P.M. we were ready at the barrier for the men to start streaming through. Camp Friedland is several miles from the barrier where the men are set free.

"Between the Soviet and Western zones of Germany there is a No-Man's Land, the width of about two city blocks. The road is blocked off by sentry boxes and by wooden barriers at each end of the No-Man's Land.

"At three o'clock we saw the men lined up beyond the Soviet zone barrier. They made no sound, and stood quite still. It was not until nearly six o'clock that evening that the barrier was raised on the Soviet side. I stationed myself inside the No-Man's Land and the men began to stream through. They were dressed in remnants of old torn Wehrmacht uniforms, four years after. Many of them had a sort of blue outfit, with Russian type padded jackets. Under their arms or on their backs they carried shapeless bundles, or wooden valises. For more than half

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an hour they trudged by, and as they came they cried out many things. One young man yelled: 'Now after five years, we can laugh again!' Many, seeing a priest standing at the barrier in the Western zone, called out the Catholic greeting 'Gruss Gott,' and some shouted, 'God be thanked that we are here.' An old man and his daughter who were waiting at the side of the road suddenly entered the line and put their arms around a young prisoner. Until that moment, he had marched like anyone else, but he was so overcome with the joy of seeing them, that they had to help him walk the rest of the way. Sobs broke out from him, and the sister and father wept with him as they walked along."

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HE continued: "Lastly came the sick, who were transferred from Soviet trucks to waiting ambulances, and last of all came an old bearded man. He was a doctor who had been taken prisoner, and he was so tired that he could hardly walk. His wife, who had been waiting for him, saw him just as he left the Russian barrier, and she ran all the way to the Russian side to greet and support him. He had been in captivity five years, and he was worn and ill.

"As he came slowly up the highway in the No-Man's Land leading to the barrier, I could see how heavily he leaned on his wife.

"All this time, a tired thin man had been sitting on the grass on the opposite side of the road from me. He had taken off his shoes, as though he had walked a long way to get to Camp Friedland.

"When the doctor finally reached the barrier, this man got up, and with his shoes still in his hand, approached him to find out if there were any more men on the transport. The doctor explained that he was the oldest, and the last. All the sick had preceded him.

"The inquirer explained that he had come to Camp Friedland because his son, a young man of 25, had been able to notify him that he would be released on this special transport. The doctor asked for the young man's name. Then the tired old doctor performed his last sad duty of the return journey, a journey that had taken 14 days in all, including the trip in rough, wooden coaches from Moscow. The young man, he explained, had died on the train, before loving arms could welcome him home.

"The father, who had waited so quietly and patiently all the day long, and for the years preceding this day, walked quietly back to where he had been sitting and sank down on the grass, his face grey.

"Back in Camp Friedland the men who were well enough were lining up for their first meal as we drove in. The sick were being served in the barracks hospital. Even the men who look well often have serious internal disorders, especially heart and kidney diseases.

"They did not mind our photographing them outside the sickrooms, or on the food line. They made many jokes, and told us how grateful to God they were for being liberated from Paradise."

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THERE are uncounted men still held in slave labor. Some maintain that 1,500,000 men have died in Soviet camps and mines and that their deaths have been unreported, thus leaving a labor pool of 400,000 men still in Russian hands. Some of these, who are classified as war criminals, will not be freed, but it was expected that all ordinary drafted soldiers, whose actions of attack and defense were substantially the same as those of any drafted soldier, would be released in the regular transports.

A sizable percentage of the men released from forced labor are dispossessed and homeless, and find their expelled families in one-room homes in wooden barracks, or even in mass quarters in old castles and hotels. But the return of these men is the signal for the family to take heart again and to begin a new life with the increased strength of the family unit. Each father who returns home decreases the bitterness of some among the millions of German children who knew their fathers were slaves, and whose resistance to teachings of democracy stemmed from a knowledge that the democratic nations of the West had given their name to slave labor at Yalta. Reparations in blood was not one of the ways to erase the crimes of the warring German nation.

Mass homecomings such as the one described above are now no more. The Soviet authorities have made an announcement that has caused a pall to descend over hundreds of thousands of homes throughout the length and breadth of Germany—the simple announcement that repatriation of German prisoners of war from the Soviet Union has been concluded. The mothers, the wives, the children who hoped against hope for an eventual reunion have gone into mourning. The fate of a vast host of men is unknown.

There are so many who are still held in the far reaches of Siberia and Soviet Asia in forced labor, not only Germans captured in war, but Austrian and Hungarian soldiers and unnumbered innocent civilians from Poland and the Baltic States, that we who can help in no other way must at least join in the great prayer of the Vicar of Christ for the Holy Year:

> "May the Holy Year be for all men . . . the year of the great return and of the great pardon. . . . Grant, O Lord, to the Refugees and Prisoners a homeland, and to all men, Thy grace."

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A Kind of Miracle

Christian Charity in what was once a concentration camp.

By GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

"THE Triangle of Death" is the name of one of the most violently Communist spots in all Italy, a fertile plain near the old town of Modena. It got its name at the time that the German armies collapsed in Northern Italy under the assault of the Allies, coming from the south. The Communist reaction to everything that was not Communist was so fierce and indiscriminate in this part of Italy that it was baptized "The Triangle of Death." Tens of thousands of people were killed here at the same time Mussolini was, and the country is still Communist to such a degree that the police have to keep order with Sherman tanks and tear gas.

It is in the very middle of this "Triangle of Death" that a kind of Christian miracle has happened, a miracle of love, that goes by the strange Greek name of Nomadelphia, "the city where fraternity is law." The Communists are afraid of it and do not dare to attack it directly, for it makes them look both foolish and backward, invulnerable as it is to hatred and violence.

In a lonely place a few miles north of Modena there was an ill-famed concentration camp built by the Germans and called the Fossoli camp. One day just after the war, even before the camp was broken up and when the last prisoners were preparing to leave it, some trucks arrived and stopped at the main entrance. They were loaded with all sorts of odd furniture, mattresses, tools and, to the amazement of the Italian military guard which was in charge of the camp, a small orchestra was sitting on top of the first truck playing a march. From the trucks children of all ages jumped in impressive numbers. It was "the mad priest," Father Zeno Saltini from the village of San Giacomo Roncole nearby, with all his young protegés. They had come to occupy the camp.

That was the actual foundation of Nomadelphia. "The mad priest" had interpreted the Gospel in his own way and had taken action accordingly. He collected the most innocent and defenseless victims of a ravaged society, children deprived of a mother and a family and, particularly, children who had no chance to be adopted —that is, the offspring of prostitutes and criminals, or children born out of the relations between Italian women and unknown soldiers belonging to the foreign armies, or "hopeless cases" from orphanages and educational centers. He had collected round him for years the youthful outcasts of Italy, boys and girls from a few years of age to teen-agers and he was determined to abolish the word "orphan," which he felt was an intolerable word for any Christian to use. Before the occupation of the Fossoli camp, he had had great difficulties lodging them all and it was no wonder he received the nickname "the mad priest."

But don't think he intended to found an ordinary charitable institute for particularly destitute orphans or even anything like Boys' Town or a new religious order. His ambitions were far greater than that. What he wanted to give these children, whom nobody would dare to adopt, was the very thing they needed most and what no institution or orphanage in the world could give them, and that is a mother and a family and, even more than that, a new society in the old corrupted one.

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THIS was the miracle he had been waiting for as the kids gathered round him in increasing numbers for ten years. He knew that the miracle was going to happen one day. People shook their heads and even laughed at him. He met opposition and criticism even from believers and the clergy. The whole thing seemed too fantastic and unrealistic to them.

Then, all of a sudden, shortly before the occupation of the concentration camp, it happened. A young girl student of nineteen came to him and said simply: "Father Zeno—I have been praying and trying myself for a long time and I think I am able to manage it." At first he did not dare to believe it. She gave up her examinations, her family life and relations, everything, and took care of six children from a few months of age to thirteen years. She succeeded. They loved her desperately with all the need to love and be loved that these children had been deprived of

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and they called her "Mama." She loved them not as a teacher or an educator, but as a real mother.

She had shown the way and other women had enough strength and heroic spirit of sacrifice to follow her. Some of them were young and some of them middle-aged, some were unmarried, some had been married and some were working-women and some were ladies. Many of them had to be eliminated since they did not have the physical strength to stand the strain, or did not love the children as real mothers but only as housekeepers or teachers. The main thing was that the miracle had happened and had happened in the very heart of "The Triangle of Death." But most people did not believe it until they had actually seen it and touched it like Saint Thomas the doubter.

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NOW Nomadelphia, "the city where fraternity is law," has more than one thousand inhabitants, counting "mothers" and children. The barbed wire has been taken away but the watch towers are still standing, transformed into pigeon-houses that can be seen from a long distance above the fertile plain. The barracks are buzzing like beehives with all the children. The man who took me round the place was dressed in working clothes and was one of the team of young priests trained by Father Zeno. They are going to create new Nomadelphias all over Italy and the world. There is no limit to their ambitions.

The priests in Nomadelphia have to do all sorts of manual work at the same time as their priestly functions, just as the custom was in the early Christian communities and originally in many of the great religious orders. All the teen-agers who have finished school are working in the fields, in the stables and in the workshops belonging to the "city." No money or private property exists and everybody receives only the necessary amounts of calories a day in food, the necessary clothes and a bed. The teen-agers and the grown-ups are helping to take care of the small babies and of the school children, who are receiving their training in the city itself from teachers who are willing to give everything for them and who receive as payment only a bed, a suit and three frugal meals a day. There is a barber, too, living under the same conditions, who plays violin and even composes music during his spare time. He describes himself as a perfectly happy man and he looks like it. They showed me a little lad of five with great grave eyes, which already carry the mark of suffering. "We had to keep him here for more than a year before he smiled for the first time," his "mother" told me.

When all these children grow up they are free to leave or to remain, or, having once gone, to return. The majority remain or return, because the world outside appears cold and grey and loveless to them. Life is by no means tedious in Nomadelphia. There is a bar with a young barman, a dancing floor and an orchestra, a billiard table and a large room which does double duty as a church and a cinema theater. Now and then young couples marry and Father Zeno himself plays the accordion and the dance goes on till late in the night.

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A COUPLE of years ago Father Zeno was confronted with a grave problem when one of these young newly-married couples declared that they would remain in Nomadelphia and take care of a number of children at the same time as the children they hoped to have themselves. Would not the young couple even involuntarily favor their own offspring at the expense of the adopted ones? He decided to try. The result was surprisingly favorable. In most cases these parents made no distinction between their own and the other children. According to Father Zeno every child has the mysterious power to create love in a normal, generous woman, no matter whether it is born of her or not, and this love increases with every new child that she is nursing. Every new child creates in her more love, for every child has the sacred right to be loved, which is the best cure for the moral diseases it has brought with it or for the bad hereditary tendencies it might have from its parents. He thinks love is more necessary for a child than all the vitamins and calories and intelligence tests in a well-run, perfectly hygienic orphanage.

Nomadelphia is poor, heartbreakingly poor. It is only 50 percent self-supporting and for the rest it relies firmly upon Providence—that is upon gifts and debts. Its bookkeeping for a daily expense of roughly one thousand dollars would be a kind of shock to even the most indulgent auditor. Debts to well-to-do Catholic creditors are paid only if possible and it is rarely possible. The well-to-do Catholic creditors hesitate to declare it bankrupt and the main reason is that the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, Ildefonso Schuster, is wholeheartedly supporting it and so is Countess Albertoni-Pirelli, the intelligent daughter of Albert Pirelli, who is the founder of one of the biggest enterprises in Northern Italy.

The trouble with Father Zeno is that he is not sufficiently humble toward the rich who offer gifts to Nomadelphia and therefore some people have been blind enough to accuse him of being a Communist. He thinks that these gifts are not so much a good action as the most fundamental duty of wealthy people, if they want to avoid

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Communism. He thinks that the Gospel is like a gold mine, which has not yet been entirely explored. Hidden treasures are still waiting to be discovered and applied to new times and new situations, as for instance, the divine advice to everybody who is not suffering from poverty to give *"quod superest,"* the superfluous, to the needy. According to him it means much more than most Christians think. The increasingly narrow interpretation of it during the last centuries has been one of the reasons for the breeding of Communism.

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MORE than three thousand children from all over Italy are waiting for admission to Nomadelphia and Father Zeno is obliged to refuse them for lack of space and means. Some 196,000 more have all the qualifications to be admitted, according to his calculations. That is why he takes the risk of letting Nomadelphia live on the edge of bankruptcy and that is why he has founded a new Nomadelphia in another particularly red spot, Batignon di Grosseto in Tuscany.

After having visited everything in the "city," I finally met Father Zeno himself. He was working in the fields with his boys and stopped for a while when I arrived, leaning on his spade. He by no means looked like an unrealistic religious crank; on the contrary, he is a "tough" type of about fifty years and not particularly talkative. He is of the same rough human material as the fanatic Communists everywhere in the villages and towns in "The Triangle of Death" and seemed unwilling to talk about the amazing performance he had achieved. And I myself was too impressed to pay him cheap compliments about it.

Later on the same day, in the town of Modena, I was told about his relations with the local Communists. During a recent Communist meeting he arrived toward the end when the audience started to ask questions. He asked the speaker whether he, too, could put a question. No local priest but Father Zeno would have dared to enter the place, owing to the evident risk of being beaten up. But nobody dared to touch him. The speaker seemed to be embarrassed by his request. Father Zeno asked whether the Communists pooled all their earnings and divided it equally among themselves. The speaker started to explain the different reasons why they don't. Father Zeno interrupted him and said he was not interested in the reasons. He just wanted to know whether they did so or not. The speaker seemed increasingly embarrassed and replied finally that they did not, shrugging his shoulders.

"If that is so," said Father Zeno, "you are nothing but backward reactionaries, the whole bunch of you!"

FROM FRANCE

The School Question

FOR several months the problem of the non-public school in France has been going through an acute stage. A bishop of Vendée, a Catholic province, highly traditionalist, almost set off an explosion a few weeks ago. Addressing a congress of more than 20,000 (representing hundreds of thousands of Frenchmen) he encouraged the parents of pupils in non-public schools to "defer paying taxes" in order to protest against the grave injustice being done them.

Are we therefore to run into as serious an agitation as that which accompanied expulsion of the teaching orders from France at the beginning of this century? That is not likely. Neither the Church nor the State is anxious to have feeling stirred up. But that does not prevent the problem of freedom of instruction from poisoning the atmosphere of some ten French *départements* today; and it focuses attention on a much more serious aspect of the crisis in French education.

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WHAT is the issue, and what is meant in France by freedom of instruction? Everyone has the right to open a school—except the members of certain religious orders which are explicitly barred from doing so—on condition that he has the necessary university diplomas. But unlike other countries France does not accord the non-public schools the same equal treatment as the public schools. The latter are free; while in order to exist, the non-public schools must demand tuition.

Such a system might be feasible if the private schools were but a luxury for certain bourgeois families who wanted to bring up their children sheltered from contact with the people. But that is not the case. Catholic schools take care of more than a million children in the elementary grades as against four million in the public schools. In secondary schools the figures are 300,000 as against 410,000. Nine-tenths of the non-public schools are Catholic and from one-fifth to one-quarter of French youth attend them.

The laws of 1882 to 1886 laicized public instruction and that of 1904 deprived many religious orders of the right to teach. Although the sponsors of this legislation said they wanted to establish neutral schools, these laws embodied the basically anti-Christian and anti-religious spirit of the time. Rationalism, a blind belief in progress, scientism, contempt for "Catholic obscurantism"—up to 1939—that was the essential educational philosophy of the normal schools which supplied the public school teachers. The public school therefore seemed to be a

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machine at war with Catholicism, an instrument bent on the destruction of religious faith in France.

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CATHOLIC circles reacted: priests thundered from the pulpit against these teachers. An atmosphere of intolerance and bitter struggle spread everywhere, which only today is dying down, thanks be to God. Heroic efforts were made by Catholic groups to build up both school and teaching personnel. They succeeded, but at the cost of continual sacrifice, for the budget of non-public schools is around twenty-five billion francs a year. If at the turn of the century there were still a number of well-to-do Catholic families, that is no longer the case.

For ten years now heads of Christian families who have continued to supply the salaries of the clergy, support their parish churches and contribute to many apostolic and charitable works, have been asking for some let-up. For they cannot keep on. Here is a single example: in Vendée 275,000 Catholics spent a hundred million francs for their own schools and more than two hundred millions to support public schools. Yet in a number of Brittany villages the public school teacher had but a single pupil. This single pupil costs several millions of state funds in the course of a year, while all the other local children go to the non-public school.

That is the situation against which these families are up in arms. The State inscribes in the Constitution the right of freedom of instruction; but it forces everybody to pay taxes for the public school. And it then says to those who patronize non-public schools, "Look to it yourself if you want to send your children to schools of your own choice."

The indignation of these parents is understandable. What does a freedom amount to without the material conditions under which it can be exercised? Why does not the State, recognizing the public service which we take responsibility for, return part of the sums that it takes in by way of taxes? Why not treat all schools on the same equal footing and, as they do in other countries, institute a system which would permit parents to send children to the schools of their choice?

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GOVERNMENTS must take realities into account. And if non-public schools close their doors, the public school system would be unable to handle the children. A few figures will show what a serious crisis there is, especially for primary and secondary education.

Crisis in personnel. Elementary classes average 26 pupils each. But this figure varies greatly according to *département* and a number of teachers have more than 50 to 60 pupils. The review, *Education Nationale,* estimates the number of secondary school pupils who must enroll in private schools *against their will* at 30,000 a year. No place can be found for them in State institutions.

Crisis in buildings and material. More than 5,000 elementary classrooms, 1,000 secondary and technical classrooms, 4 faculties and 1 university were destroyed in the war. Our technical establishments, our laboratories of higher learning, have wretched material equipment.

The future prospects are not at all encouraging. The teaching reform outlined by the Langevin Commission would prolong individual instruction to the age of eighteen years. That means two million new pupils in the next ten years if it is carried out. That would suppose 50,000 classrooms with 50,000 additional teachers.

But the teaching body today suffers from a considerable disaffection primarily because of low salaries. A beginner gets from twelve to fifteen thousand francs ($40 to $50) a month. In some *départements* there are more vacancies than candidates and the quality of teaching leaves more and more to be desired.

But how can it be otherwise when France spends seventy billions for national education, two percent of our revenue; military expenditures take ten percent, and every year we spend five hundred to six hundred billions for beverages of various kinds. Is French education, which was once so renowned, to be definitely relegated to the status of a poor relative?

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IT IS AT THIS point that Catholics believe they are justified in saying to the State: "Our schools are useful to you; help us to keep them going." But despite simple appearances, the problem, on second thought, is much more complex.

The State unquestionably cannot afford to develop its own schools; it is grateful to Catholics for supplying what it fails to do. But that does not mean that in normal times it has any interest in developing non-public schools.

For one thing, on the technical and professional level these schools, with rare exceptions, are clearly inferior to the public ones. The teaching personnel has a moral character beyond suspicion, but its teaching competence, its intellectual and educative value seem notoriously below those of the personnel in public schools.

From the civic angle, it is well said that there is no unity without diversity. But can the State ignore that for years the non-public school has been a focus of resistance to the idea of the Republic, to all social progress. Even today, they say, it is the conservative and reactionary circles who most warmly defend the non-public school. It is understandable that the State counts more on public instruction than private to bring about the civic unity of French youth. But there is a whole sector of Catholic opinion today which holds that in right and in fact the Church is perhaps mistaken to continue to concentrate all its efforts on the non-public school. What arguments support this?

First an argument of fact. Christian families will not be able to continue for many years to bleed themselves white in order to find twenty-five billions a year. Outside of the West (where social pressure is very great)

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and the North (where there is still some money) Christian parents are more and more sending their children to public schools.

On the other hand, the educational mission of the Church is with youth. We know that the child is more malleable than the adult and that the influence exerted on the child has a good chance of remaining long with him. But some people remark that one does not Christianize a nation by exerting influence only upon children and abandoning adults. A number of adult environments (workshops, factories, offices) are de-Christianized and demand the presence of priests. Yet many of these are too busy teaching mathematics or English to children who will certainly never be bold and militant Christians. Also in the early centuries of the Church the catechism was addressed especially to adults. Speaking to men in a man's language which corresponded to their experience as men, the Church converted the Roman world—not by addressing herself to children.

Does the teaching mission of the Church function best within the school itself? Some people are not so sure. Divine Grace does not well up in us because we are continually talking with religious on secular subjects or because we have good manners. The necessity for passing examinations has more and more brought religious instruction in our non-public schools to be a subject similar to other subjects. Besides, many bourgeois families would distrust schools in which the attempt was made to give their children a faith that was a bit vehement; they send their children to non-public schools so that they will have a good education and not that they will take the faith seriously enough to want to enter religious life.

The argument that the secular school is anti-Christian, rationalist, etc. That no longer holds water, is the reply. There are, to be sure, instructors and professors who indirectly criticize religion, who give children a naive faith in human reason, in the Promethean power of humanity. But they are a minority. And faith needs to encounter contradictions. More than three million baptized children attend the public schools, and, for the most part, the most militant Christians are its products (among them several bishops).

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THE principal argument of the defenders of the non-public school is that from the viewpoint of enlisting aspirants to the priesthood, it constitutes one of the key instruments of the Church's organization. Nine-tenths of the French seminarians are products of non-public teaching. But is it certain that these young men became priests because of where they went to school or that they went to such schools because they wanted to become priests and were encouraged to do so by their families, their social milieu, etc?

The last argument is political. If there is only one school, it would take orders from a totalitarian government which would seize the reins of power. Therefore, since we are threatened by Communism, it would be better to keep a pluralist education system. It is obviously easy to reply that if the Communists took control of France, the existence of non-public schools would not prove a great obstacle to the installation of their dictatorship.

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THESE are the arguments which have been carried on for many months. Contrary to what might have been expected, the discussion has often taken place in an unfrenzied manner, and each side has manifested understanding of the other. Since the respective situations of private and public school systems are becoming more and more difficult, both parties have sought the path of conciliation and understanding.

But how is it possible to reconcile the two views? Toward what positive solution can steps be taken? The most enlightened people on both sides seem to be veering toward the solution of a *national* school. Such a school is not a nationalized school (indeed, in France nationalized is synonymous with statized). The university about which people are thinking would be an *autonomous* university, not dependent upon the power of the executive as it is today.

It would enjoy on the whole, under certain state controls, a status analogous to that of the judiciary. This school would be a lay school. That is to say it would have charge of the academic training of the children, leaving to other institutions the task of supplying other forms of education (affection, to the family; social education, to youth movements; religious instruction, to religious orders).

This school would in principle be the only school and attendance would be compulsory. But as its operation would be put in the hands of those most interested (teachers, parents and representatives of the State), its freedom could and would be organized from within. And nothing would prevent those responsible from allowing private schools living on their own resources to exist for various good reasons. The Church naturally would keep her schools for the training of the clergy, minor and major seminaries.

From the point of view of religious education the major effort of the faithful would be to obtain sufficient freedom in the new school—that is to say a sufficient number of hours so that their children could participate in the life of their Church. One solution would doubtless be for the religious orders to open boarding schools so that public secondary school pupils nearby could be given the religious instruction desired by their families.

Such a plan has the great merit of bringing the adversaries in France out of their accustomed positions by presenting positive solutions and forcing them to think of the educational problem as a whole. That is not to say that in a few years the current of struggle and opposition which has existed for a hundred years will be turned back or that a university welcomed by all will be set up tomorrow. The important thing is that mutual understanding is growing and that on both sides there are men and women of good will ready to discuss the matter.

ROBERT BARRAT.

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THE LABOR MOVEMENT

This Contagious Peace

SO much news is available for comment that I keep asking myself what John Cort, whose property this column is, would do with it. News from Korea troubling our radios revives plans for a draft of labor as well as of capital, and one gets the feeling that a new war and such a draft are necessarily compatible. But one hopes he will never have to write about that.

Human nature breaks out as it always does and evidence of it is the rail strike in the Middle West and the Newspaper Guild strike in New York. But peace is more important than war, and peace is running like a contagion through the labor movement. The hardly peaceful Dave Beck, heir apparent to Dan Tobin, and leader of the West Coast Teamsters, signed a "stipulation" not to intimidate employers to abandon their contracts with Harry Bridges and sign with Beck. The fact that the agreement was induced by the government, through the National Labor Relations Board, does not lessen its significance.

Warfare, never strident but ill-concealed, between Daniel Tracy, international president of the AFL Electrical Workers and the business agent of New York's famous Local 3, has been oddly muted. Oddly because the head of Local 3, Harry Van Arsdale, has been found guilty of monopoly practices and given a suspended sentence by Mr. Tracy. Oddly because Mr. Van Arsdale's guilt was not determined by Mr. Tracy but by a referee chosen by him—Professor Douglas R. Maggs of Duke University Law School.

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IT HAS been an open secret for some time that electrical manufacturing employers in and outside of New York could not get their products used in construction here in this city. Products made only by concerns which had contracts with Local 3 were so used. Local contractors were put under obligation by Mr. Van Arsdale to purchase equipment only from such concerns as had such contracts. A special union label was placed on all electrical equipment, cables, fixtures, switch boxes, outlet boxes, to make sure that no other products were used. Testimony to this effect was offered to Professor Maggs in twenty-four hearings.

Mr. Van Arsdale beat the gun by sending letters to all electrical contractors in New York City, after the charges had been filed, relieving them of the obligation to limit their purchases, as they had been doing; but the hearings were held and the findings made in spite of this. But because the letters were sent, Mr. Tracy, having levied the sentence, put Mr. Van Arsdale on probation for three years. Thus he is in hostage, as Francis Bacon might put it, to goodness.

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THE origin of the word sabotage is known, I suppose, to everyone. The practice was a child of fear, by workers, of machines. Like James Thurber's automobile, machines were regarded by workers as monsters possessing "antic intelligence," malice and the power of revenge. Workers have always been afraid of them; at best an uneasy peace has prevailed between them. If for no other reason than that the new contract between printers and publishers in Washington deserves some notice. Part of the agreement reads as follows:

> The union and the publishers are agreed that both would benefit from an experimental program, during the term of this agreement, covering the introduction, operation and use of tele-typesetting equipment.

This agreement was signed on June 25 by the AFL Columbia Typographical Union No. 101, which has jurisdiction over newspaper printers. One of the more interesting things about it is that the union is given jurisdiction over the devices, and that a Joint Experimental Committee is to be set up. Composed of two representatives from the union and two from management, the committee is enjoined "to work out procedures and conditions covering the introduction of, training for, proper manning requirements, standards of competency, scales of wages and other matters pertaining to their use and operation." And it is further agreed that after introduction "the publisher or publishers, as the case may be, and the union will cooperate fully in efforts to obtain maximum production therefrom."

All this, I think, needs hardly any comment. As I understand it the use of such tele-typesetting machines means that copy be set in a composing room from points far distant. But the really important thing is the contractually empirical nature of the venture: the abandonment by management of the, hitherto, arbitrary practice of introducing labor saving devices on its own, without consulting the union. Peace is many things and must be defined in many ways. It is not merely the absence of war: it is the absence of fear and tension which is, often, the result of fear. In the old days such a contract would, with contempt, have been called class-collaboration. Now it seems to be simply an exercise in intelligence.

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AND intelligence, if I may say so, seems to be investing industrial relations in New York. Peace in our subways may come out of what is called a "memorandum of understanding" arrived at by the CIO Transport Workers, the Board of Transportation and the Mayor. The "memorandum" was devised, I am told, by Theodore Keel and David Cole, both of whom are well known

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arbitrators and labor relations experts.

I want to say at once that there is one thing about it I do not clearly understand. In it the union has bound itself not to do certain specific things. Among these is the agreement not to strike or interfere with transit operation for a period of two years. It strikes me that that is like contracting, for a specific period of time, not to commit murder. You cannot contract not to commit a crime, and murder is a crime. Nor can you contract with me not to burn down my house. Both of these things, the murder and the arson, are explicitly forbidden by law.

The New York City transit workers are employed by the city; they are public employees. As such, they are legally forbidden to strike under the terms of the Condon-Wadlin Law. The covering clause of this law I cited (COMMONWEAL, May 5, 1950) and, here, only refer to it. That being the case, how is it possible for men to bind themselves in writing to do what they cannot do, anyway? It could be that I am more than usually obtuse, but if I am not, Mike Quill has taken on the status of a comedian. It may be that a sense of comedy has been notably lacking in our industrial relations. Even so, when you are in the presence of what is comic you laugh. You are singularly obtuse if you take it seriously.

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TAKEN seriously, however, the other features of the memorandum should make for peace. When whatever criticism one wishes to make of Mike Quill has been registered, it remains true that up until now the absence of a clear and efficient grievance procedure has been, for him, a legitimate grievance.

In the new accord this grievance dissolves. It is now admitted that "grievances are a matter of deep mutual concern and should be promptly and equitably decided, preferably in the early steps of the procedure." And it has been agreed to resolve all disputes in accordance with the machinery provided for handling grievances in the memorandum.

Industrial engineers are to make a study of equipment and of methods of use and operation used by the Board of Transportation. They are also to discover if it is possible to work out a method by which a five-day, forty hour week can be made effective. The union agreed, moreover, to recognize the authority of the Board of Transportation, and to "cooperate in the attainment of efficient operation." Contracts depend on the character of the men who make them. Yet quite apart from the legal sanctions inhering in them, they are, even for the naturally lawless, exercises in education, in learning. Freedom must be learned, as law is learned, as peace is learned. It is well even for the cynical to remember that the poised and graceful young lady who is now your grown-up daughter was, if you honestly remember, born a savage.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

Communications

Catholics and Liberals

Elizabeth, N. J.

TO THE EDITORS: I am a Roman Catholic conservative. THE COMMONWEAL'S two articles "Catholics and Liberals" [June 16] were interesting certainly, but suffered under the widespread modern delusion of the necessity of liberalism. John C. Cort's article points out one example after another of the contradiction between liberalism and Catholicism, and yet he says "if they [Catholics] are true to the teachings of the Church they cannot be anything else [but liberals]." Now I deny this, and if Mr. Cort will re-read his own, and Mr. Loeb's, articles I believe he will also. I shall not go so far as to say that a Catholic must be a conservative, but conservatism is a much more likely position—than liberalism—for a thoughtful Catholic.

Mr. Cort, and THE COMMONWEAL also in its introductory editorial, make one of the commonest mistakes of terminology of this century. They confuse liberalism with social interest. In the "true meaning" (I quote THE COMMONWEAL'S sub-head on John Cort's article) of the word I am more conservative than anyone I know yet I can answer every one of Mr. Cort's questions with a resounding affirmative, because none of them identifies a liberal, but only a Christian—perhaps more accurately a man of brotherly love. I can fit John's proferred "liberal uniform," but he can't make me wear it.

What is liberalism? Who is a liberal? Try these questions. Does he believe in democracy for all peoples? The natural goodness of men, the inevitability of progress, Congressional legislation as a solution for social problems? The typical liberal belief in birth control, euthanasia, psychoanalysis and Kinsey—which Mr. Cort presumably deplores—is a logical conclusion from the premise that natural solutions are available for all the world's problems, and from a second common liberal premise that we must rethink our moral code to fit the changing times.

The conservative thinks of republicanism as the least unsatisfactory government in countries such as the Netherlands, Great Britain, France and the United States, where a good-sized minority (10-15% in our own country) of the population are more or less dedicated to a belief in human freedom. My own limited experience in the Philippines made me immediately aware—before it was tried and found terribly wanting—that democracy there was a fool's dream. Monarchy has frequently led to abuse, of course. The point is that democracy has done likewise. The tyranny of the mob, however much the liberal may close his eyes to it, is tyranny. Dictatorship is not a temporary misfortune in the Soviet, in South America, in Germany, and in the many other nations afflicted with it, but an unavoidable result of "democracy" for peoples who are spiritually unprepared for it. It is more pleasant to believe in the natural goodness of man than in the Catholic doctrine of original sin and

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the Fall, but it is not the less a fallacy which has done tremendous damage to world politics. Thoughtful monarchs are less rare than thoughtful mobs.

Paul Elmer More has written an article on the natural aristocracy well worth reading. This aristocracy exists, as sure as *hoi polloi* exist. Membership is by talent not by birth, and carries with it no privileges but many duties. One cannot in a letter outline the conservative doctrine. It is a belief in the amorality—animality—of most men most of the time, combined with a belief in the real, if not actual, dignity of each man and each woman. The conservative "christian" (using the word in its non-theological sense) is likely to be found bringing clothing to his unfortunate neighbor down the block, while his liberal counterpart is busy packing parcels for Europe. Because he has no illusions about his neighbor, the conservative finds love for him easy, while the liberal must love mankind, because men dismay him. . . .

Conservatism, too, has been disgraced by those who pretend to be of its body but who do not understand its spirit. This should not impair our belief in its truth, though, any more than the words and actions of prominent "Catholics" who are also of our body, but ignorant of our spirit, reduce our belief in the truth of the Roman Catholic Church. JOHN E. CONNOR.

Somerville, Mass.

TO THE EDITORS: As a student preparing for the Unitarian ministry, may I express my warm approval and satisfaction in the articles by Messrs. Loeb and Cort. . . .

Yet certain problems arose in my mind as I read Mr. Cort's words. For one thing, the attitude of Mr. Cort and his brethren is, I believe, pitifully rare in Roman Catholic circles. Indeed, it appears to many of us to be the view of a tiny minority engulfed by the clerical arrogance that marks the political and social influence of the Church in those areas where its numerical and economic strength dominate. (Granted that this is probably true for all mass institutions; nevertheless, it has compelling significance in relation to the Church because of its sweeping doctrinal claims embodied in its vast organization.) Too, many of us look with suspicion upon Papal pronouncements for social justice when the authors of these same pronouncements lend their support (actively and passively) to regimes in which ancient evils are preserved by brutal totalitarianism fed by poverty and ignorance. Again, this tragic conflict between the ideal and its actual application is hardly an exclusively Catholic sin! It gives birth to that paralysis of will which undermines the ethical imperative of any movement. And yet, must not our moral judgment rest with *special* severity upon the Roman Catholic Church by the very nature of its structure, in its beliefs and in its exercise of power.

While I cannot (obviously) presume to speak for liberals, I am certain that no one worthy of the name should ever consciously embrace any ideas or support any policies aimed at creating hatred for Catholics or contempt for Catholic teachings. Mr. Cort's liberal "reads Paul Blanshard" not because he takes a sadistic joy in assailing the Church, but rather because (rightly or wrongly) he feels that the political and social policies of the Church (which, after all, *are* determined by the Hierarchy) threaten to create an aggressive and separatist community which will disrupt and endanger the free operation of democracy.

It is a pity THE COMMONWEAL cannot reprint these articles for mass circulation. Is it too much to hope that they might set a light of love, born from understanding and mutual respect, in the midst of the terror of the gathering darkness?

CHARLES H. WHITTIER.

The Screen

WOE IS YOU

PROBLEMS—that's what the new movies are full of; and anyone going to see this week's releases will have to think, a little at least. Of course there are unusual enough situations to provide escape from one's everyday humdrum life, and enough excitement to titillate one's nerves, and several girls pretty enough to detract from the realism of the problems. But still you'll have to concentrate a bit when you see these films; you might even wonder what you would do under similar circumstances.

"The White Tower" proposes the question: just why do men climb mountains, particularly those unscaled heights that present such a dangerous challenge? When our American hero (Glenn Ford) is invited to join the group that is about to tackle an unclimbed mountain in Switzerland, he asks, "What for? Do you think it's worth the energy?" Since I feel as he does, I was surprised to find myself shortly thereafter completely absorbed in this good movie. It has a fine script written by Paul Jarrico from the novel by James Ramsey Ullman; and Ted Tetzlaff, who directed it, has done an excellent job. Once the film gets over its opening talkiness (mostly exposition stuff with motivations and characterization) it becomes as exciting as anything I've seen.

In the party on this exhausting climb are a girl (Valli) who is interested because her father, "the greatest mountain climber of our generation," failed on this particular peak; a Swiss Guide (Oscar Homolka); an English botanist (Sir Cedric Hardwicke); a novelist (Claude Rains) very much in conflict with his wife who disparages everything he does including his excessive drinking; a Nazi (Lloyd Bridges) who thinks he's a superman and is out to prove it. And the American comes along apparently for not any other reason than a growing interest in the girl. What happens to this group makes fascinating film fare that will leave you as sus-

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penseful and breathless as the climbers for each of whom the mountain stands as a symbol of the main obstacle one has to overcome in life. The symbolism goes on and on in the story, but you won't get bogged down in it. If you do, there's always some magnificent scenery you can enjoy. The Technicolor is exceptionally beautiful; and the acting throughout is of a high standard. I found the romantic angles just a little too close to the love-conquers-all-including-mountain-climbing school; but even this is a point that the film is trying to put over and does so with great conviction.

★

IN *"CRISIS"* Dr. Cary Grant is faced with this problem: should he save the life of a dictator-tyrant by performing a necessary brain-tumor operation? Since Director-scriptwriter Richard Brooks states emphatically that Grant is a very good doctor and a very skilful surgeon, I am not giving away any secret when I tell that the decision is in the affirmative; furthermore this picture's main assets do not lie so much in the problem itself as in its trimmings. The locale is Latin America and the settings and character types are exceedingly well done. Jose Ferrer as the dictator, Signe Hasso as his wife, Ramon Novarro as his guard, Gilbert Roland as a leader of the opposition turn in realistic portrayals; and Cary Grant plays the American doctor with great dignity and understanding. Although Director Brooks manages to work up quite a suspense in his film, he also confuses the issues at times with a cluttering of politics which are not always clear. A strange note of cynicism runs through the entire movie—a mood well symbolized by the film's most exciting scene. Dr. Grant rehearses the operation with his assistants. At the end of this tense sequence (which is more realistic and unnerving than most operation scenes) Dictator Ferrer asks, "How did it go?" And Grant replies, "It went quite well, but you died."

Even the westerns try to present a problem every now and then other than those connected with cattle rustling and banditry. *"The Gunfighter"* asks you to shed a tear for poor Jimmie Ringo (Gregory Peck). It seems that by the '80s this notorious killer would like to forget his past and settle down with his wife and kid who are living in a quiet little cow town under assumed names. But it also seems that a dangerous gunman with 50 killings to his credit (actually only 15, numbers like this are always exaggerated) cannot retire as easily as a bank clerk. Every young squirt he brushes up against wants to pick a fight with Ringo—each hoping he'll be the one to polish off this famous killer. Producer Nunnally Johnson and Director Henry King have built an unusually good movie out of this theme, and one that has several moving and exciting scenes. Perhaps there is a touch too much glorification and let's-forget-the-past in connection with this former bad man; but the situation in which Ringo finds himself unable to put down his smoking guns is absorbing. This is a western that should appeal to the fans as well as movie goers who like to take their brains with 'em when they go to the cinema.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Of Note

Europeanism

IN AN ARTICLE in the June *Blackfriars* (St. Giles, Oxford, England), Father Finbar Synnott, O.P. writes about the rising influence of the colored peoples of the world, and the "fact that a very large part of the missionary work of the Church has become mixed up with Europeanism."

> . . . there is that whole assumption in the European literature of the faith, apart from the most philosophical or spiritual, that European institutions are the Christian institutions. For example the concepts of ownership, or of marriage, or of success in life, in all the European literature which surrounds Christianity and uses the name of God and Christ, have all their respective accretions from Roman Law, Renaissance Romanticism, and Commercialism. Even the concepts of holiness in relation to action or contemplation, activism or peculiar European forms of introspection, need clarifying.
>
> The Holy See has visualized all this in its mission policy, just as in its policy towards Greek Christianity. And while the missionaries continue to use the "old order," the subsidized school system of the colonial power, the land grant of the mining company, the contact created by European diplomacy or commerce, the whole emphasis of the mission endeavor of the Church now is to develop indigenous institutions, and most particularly to create an indigenous clergy, and to create it in a manner best fitted to the local customs and psychology. . . . With African and Indian Bishops . . . and a Chinese Cardinal, this principle is established. . . . White Catholics, migrating to or growing up in colored regions, even missionaries, can learn from it to shake off the insidious prejudice of their birth that white men are the best kind of men. There is a scope for wider sympathy in all Catholic thought and activity towards the real values in non-European culture. There is evidence to be collected of that universal human application of the Natural Law which the Medievals called the *Jus Gentium,* most especially in the burning question of the distribution of human wealth, but also in many other matters affecting natural Ethics. The study of prayer and contemplation could learn from Eastern and African forms of asceticism and meditation, just as it gathered much of use from Plato. It is urgent that Catholicism should not be transliterated only but fully translated into the non-European cultures, that it should be less and less markedly connected with European forms—just as its Founder was not a European but an inhabitant of that

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corner of the Mediterranean where European, Asiatic and African meet. Thought for the position of the Church when the Asiatic and the African, like the Russian, has reached a stage when he no longer desires anything European merely because it is European, can assist our charity in seeing the importance of this full interpretation of *Catholicism*.

Atomic Weapons

THE *Catholic Herald* (67 Fleet Street, London) in its issue of June 23 published the text of a recent pastoral letter written by the Cardinals and Archbishops of France.

> Last Autumn the Cardinals and Archbishops of France urged the Catholics of our country to be efficacious workers for peace among their fellow citizens.
>
> Since then, alas, the cold war has not ceased to cause anguish to the hearts of men who know the frightful disasters a new world war would bring.
>
> Modern science has put into the hands of belligerents means of destruction like atomic weapons, rockets, radio-active gases and biological weapons which are a terrible threat hanging over the heads of all peoples.
>
> In such a nightmare atmosphere, it is understandable that the [Communist] Stockholm Appeal against the use of atomic weapons should have seduced many generous minds. The question is persistently put to you, to your priests, and to your bishops, asking whether we condone the use of these atomic weapons. But such a question, addressed to the disciples of Christ, scandalizes and revolts them.
>
> As the Pope said two years ago, no one with a "true sense of humanity" can approve the use of modern weapons which strike indiscriminately at soldiers and civilians, and which blindly spread death over areas that daily grow wider and wider, with man's increasing scientific knowledge.
>
> For our part we condemn them with all our strength, as we had no hesitation in condemning the mass bombings during the last war which, in attacks on military objectives, killed old men, women and children at the same time.
>
> We are convinced that mankind will be disgracing the intelligence God gave it, if it perverts to evil ends scientific knowledge which could so fruitfully be used for good.
>
> We therefore ask statesmen, who at the present time carry a crushing weight of responsibility, not to give way to the horrible temptation of employing these means of destruction, and to do everything in their power to reach a common agreement for the absolute ban on their use. . . .

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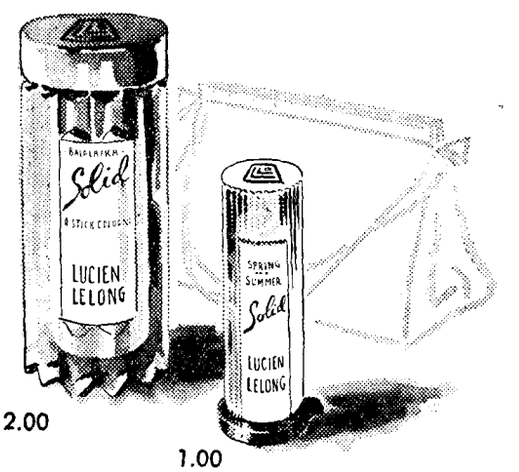

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Books

Men Without Faces. Louis Francis Budenz. Harper. $3.50.

THE Communist Party is everywhere—even in the United States—a conspiracy which uses all means, legal and illegal, to carry out orders given by Moscow. This fact, known to all students of the Communist movement and literature, is today, fortunately, widely publicized in the United States not only through the policies of the Soviet Union, but also through the proceedings against Soviet spies and Communist leaders in which Budenz, until 1945 a member of the American party and from 1940 managing editor of the *Daily Worker,* appeared as government witness. In his new book, containing many more details than the first volume of his anti-Communist period, Budenz describes the internal structure of the American Communist party. He tells how it is led by Moscow agents; he describes the thorough control of the personal life of all Communists; he gives many examples of the amoral attitude of Communist authorities towards individual Communists—they are "expendable."

LAY CATHOLIC WRITERS

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Budenz is right in complaining about the naivete of many progressives and liberals who do not realize when they are used as Communist tools. Some statements are general hints which should be substantiated: on page 53 Budenz declares that the Communist "Field . . . was an officer of the Institute of Pacific Relations who there hobnobbed with bigwigs from the State Department. For instance, among the gentlemen with whom Field was on good terms in the IPR was Dr. Philip Jessup, later to become famous as the author of our White Paper on China." Does Budenz mean that Jessup's views were shaped or influenced by the Communist Field? It would also have been useful if Budenz had provided illustrations for his statement (page 291): "I can say flatly that in the intellectual, professional and creative fields particularly it [the Communist Party] is more strongly entrenched than it was when I left the Party in 1945."

Budenz has surely helped to prosecute Communists successfully. Even if one has observed that he was not alone in uncovering the role of the Communist leading agent Eisler, one must acknowledge his usefulness in the fight against subversive elements. But despite this fact and the other fact, too, that most of his present enemies attack him for wrong reasons—Budenz became in their eyes a villain only after he started to tell about his experiences in the Communist Party—it must be stated that his book creates uncomfortable feelings. How could Budenz, who says that he studied earlier the Lenin-Stalin literature, join the Communist party in 1935, believing that it had now accepted an American approach? Budenz himself quotes many authoritative Communist statements before as well as after 1935, which show clearly the conspirational character of the party and its necessary subservience to world revolutionary Moscow. Even more amazing is the fact that Budenz could live for over ten years as a member of the Communist party, holding responsible positions. He immediately became aware of the amoral methods, the spying, etc., of the American Communists. Why did it take him more than ten years to see the light? Has he the right to be angry about the naivete of other Americans who—not having studied the Communist literature and not having experienced the internal working of Communism—do not realize the true character of the followers of Stalin?

BUT most questionable is the purely mechanical, organizational approach of Budenz. Surely, it is necessary to oppose anti-social activities of the Communist apparatus in all its forms, but is the Communist danger really exhausted by dealing with the apparatus and its helpers? It seems that for Budenz anti-Communism is the whole program, as if holding in check and destroying the Communist apparatus and its open and hidden influences are enough. Budenz shows no awareness of the roots which produced the poisonous plant of Communism. The absence of a deeper insight into the crisis of our time, which has produced, among other symptoms, the Communist threat, makes his book insufficient. It does not go far enough. It seems as if there are no problems left after Communism is checked (that is of course neces-

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sary, but cannot be the whole task). The Devil can assume many forms. He apparels himself surely in Communist clothes but sometimes in anti-Communist ones too. You can reject the Communist errors and unmask the Communist's devious, hypocritical, cynical methods—but that does not mean that you are aware of the whole truth. In fighting the error believing that you are completely immune to it, you can become overwhelmed by it. Communism is surely a particularly threatening menace today, but even after the disappearance of the Communist organizations there will be evil and sin left. Only a shallow optimism can believe that all evils will disappear, all questions will be solved if Communism has been destroyed. It is Budenz's decisive shortcoming that he is not in the slightest way aware of this issue. He is, in another form, as naive as the unwilling and unconscious Communist tools and agents.

IN THIS book there is no awareness of the truth so impressively stressed in a recent address by George Kennan, the counselor of the State Department and the author of the program for fighting Communist expansionism: "Let us not be too haughty to give thoughtful and dispassionate attention to these same vulnerabilities and weaknesses, to the things which cause people to become the agents of totalitarianism. Perhaps we will find some of them in ourselves. Perhaps we will find that we are encouraging their growth in others by the ways in which we conduct our society."

WALDEMAR GURIAN.

Too Little Love. Robert Henriques. Viking. $3.75.

IN THIS book two themes are interwoven with and illustrated by the lives of a small group of wealthy British country people and their satellites. The themes they represent are the political change in England from 1926 to 1948, and the justice and injustice of the law.

The political change affects these people primarily in their property rights. To some of them ownership is a trust, combining privilege with responsibility; to others, it means only the power to do as they please. In the beginning, the law protects these people and their possessions and anything outside the law is reduced to beastliness. When the political change has taken place, the law protects the masses, the non-owners, and the aristocracy must change and accept the new ideals, or decay in its own dust.

Both the rising Socialists and the old Tories, as presented in this book, can see political right only in relation to themselves. Thus selfishness is the basic cause of conflict and only through loss of self, or love, can there be any economic or political equilibrium.

The book is pleasantly lacking in absolutes. Man is portrayed as a mixture of good and bad. The characters have no definite God, but place their faith in personal integrity or a humanistic desire for men to cooperate

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among themselves. Aside from their political morals they conduct their love lives with an almost frightening abandon.

In its understanding of human motives, which of course result in governments and in laws, the book has an almost photographic accuracy. However ponderous, the picture is truthful, and, if no real solution is reached perhaps that only adds to its truth.

JOAN RICE.

The Living God. Armand Pierhal. Harper. $1.75.

THIS is an obituary rather than a review. Though the American edition of Armand Pierhal's *The Living God* appeared with the acclaim of François Mauriac and George N. Shuster, it died almost as soon as it was born—and for once the public was right. One of the critics called it succinct and lucid, but it is as muddled as can be. The author speaks, for instance, of "a hierarchy of values: good stands higher than evil." This is as if one were to say, There is a hierarchy of saints: Francis of Assisi stands higher than Adolf Hitler; as if evil were the lowest value and not the opposite, the very antithesis, the lack of value. What is one to make of this: "Let us agree that God and the devil are both incarnations (or, if you prefer, symbols) of spiritual powers"? God a symbol?—and that in a book which calls itself *The Living God!* Not even for the sake of argument, not for a split second, can we "agree" that God is other than Reality, Life, Person—"I Am who Am." And there are many more instances like these.

No doubt, the author had a real religious experience and was deeply touched by the God Who Is, but he fails utterly to lead others to Him—not, as is so often and lamentably the case, because he fails as a writer—rather for a reason he gives himself: "I lay no claims to orthodoxy. My ambition is not to be what is specifically known as a Catholic writer, but a Catholic who writes." This is perhaps his basic confusion, for of what truth does he write, "as a Catholic," if he cannot claim for it certitude and power, soundness and ecstasy—in a word, orthodoxy? And how does M. Pierhal hope to win the doubter except by the bold and glad acknowledgment of the chains of truth? Just as no one would ever dream of abandoning his humanity in order to convert an advocate of inhumanity, so a Catholic would be a fool to relinquish the claims of truth in order to convince an unbeliever. The Catholic is a lover, and he betrays his own heart if he pretends that he is not.

JOHN M. OESTERREICHER.

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